

March 11, 2005

Dear Colleague:

As part of our mission to advance access to quality health-related services for all Floridians, The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida created The Sapphire Award recognizing community health excellence. This Award will recognize and promote programs that provide health care access to Florida's underserved and uninsured and seek to improve the health care of Florida's at-risk communities.

The Blue Foundation will select up to three nonprofit recipients annually. Each recipient will receive a financial award of up to \$120,000 toward its community health objectives.

The Sapphire Awards' recognition of effective initiatives is meant to promote greater and more lasting support for improved services and systems that can be sustained over time. The Award seeks to identify and reward organizations that have demonstrated strategies that build on community assets, enhance organizational capacity, foster systemic change and/or lead to lasting policy changes that improve health services.

All completed applications will be considered and evaluated through a rigorous process. Final decisions of Award recipients will be made by a Selection Committee comprised of public health and health communication experts around the country and Florida. The Selection Committee is chaired by Dr. Charles Mahan, professor and former dean, College of Public Health, University of South Florida.

Application and materials are due in full by no later than June 29, 2005. Winners will be announced in Fall 2005.

Enclosed is a copy of the application. Please take a moment to review it and consider nominating a program that demonstrates community health excellence. For more information, please email [TheSapphireAward@bcbsfl.com](mailto:TheSapphireAward@bcbsfl.com) or call 1-800-477-3736, ext. 63215, option 2.

Sincerely,

Susan B. Towler, APR  
Executive Director, The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida and  
Vice President, Community Relations, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida

[Link from: The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida home page](#)

## **The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida Announces**

### **The Sapphire Award Recognizing Community Health Excellence**

**Nominations due: June 29, 2005**

The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida Sapphire Award Recognizing Community Health Excellence is designed to recognize and promote programs that have demonstrated impact in improving the health-related outcomes of Florida's at-risk populations and communities. The Sapphire Award's recognition of effective initiatives is meant to promote greater and more lasting support for improved services and systems that can be sustained over time. Strategies that build on community assets, enhance organizational capacity, foster systemic change, and/or lead to lasting policy changes that improve health will be especially appropriate for this Award. Successful nominations will make a strong case that the Award will meet the goals of The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida.

#### **Nature of the Award and Award Process**

The Sapphire Award recognizes and rewards community health programs of demonstrated success and high merit. It is not a grant program, and while there is a financial award, nominations should not be based on the idea of raising funds without regard to recognizing demonstrated success.

Three persons familiar with the organization are required to nominate the organization for The Sapphire Award. All final decisions determining Award recipients will be made by an independent Selection Committee of public health and health communication experts from around Florida and the nation. Up to three non-profit winners will be selected annually, each receiving a financial award toward their defined community health objectives in an amount not to exceed \$120,000 per organization. In addition, limited promotional support will be made available to help educate the public and various stakeholders about winning projects. Award announcements will be made in Fall 2005.

#### **Selection Criteria**

Key criteria include:

**Leadership:** demonstrated success in achieving health outcomes by thoughtfully, respectfully, and perhaps courageously mobilizing the organization, engaging community interest, improving the quality of programs, and leveraging resources; demonstrated ability to earn community and professional trust and support to carry out program goals and effectively utilize services;



**Public Outreach and Awareness:** proven strategies to ensure functional awareness of available health resources and effective means to access such resources, with a particular focus on service utilization by those most disenfranchised and least served;

**Strengthening Standards:** demonstrated development and employment of effective policies and practices in the care of uninsured and underserved populations, thereby modeling effective and efficient practices even under particularly challenging circumstances;

**Innovation:** demonstrated ability to conceptualize and employ alternative strategies toward improving access to quality care, overcoming obstacles to care, and producing lasting outcomes; and,

**Accountability:** rigorous approaches used to ensure and validate that policies and actual practices of health care and prevention, as well as organizational financial and administrative practices meet high standards of ethics and professionalism.

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## ORGANIZATION ELIGIBILITY

### **The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida Sapphire Award**

#### **Eligibility**

Only organizations deemed eligible by The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida will be considered. Criteria includes:

1. Organizations must have a proven record of improving the health of their community through measurable outcomes.
2. Organizations must be Internal Revenue Service recognized tax exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the federal tax code.
3. Organizations must officially reside and be incorporated in the state of Florida.
4. Organizations must have programs that are involved with health-related services.
5. Only completed nominations, meeting all eligibility requirements, will be reviewed for consideration.

Current or previous recipients of or applicants for grants from The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida are eligible for consideration so long as the program being identified meets The Sapphire Award eligibility requirements.

[Back to top](#)

2. [Link to:]

## NOMINATOR ELIGIBILITY

### **The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida Sapphire Award**

#### **Nominator Eligibility**

We respect that nominations take time away from other activities so we want to ensure that the goals of The Sapphire Award are clear. We have attempted to identify below who can and cannot serve as a nominator, and thereby help this program realize its goals in effectively and fairly identifying outstanding community health initiatives.

Nominations can be initiated by:

- a health professional, volunteer, board member, or client who knows first-hand the organization's work;
- a representative of a partnering organization, such as another non-profit organization or governmental agency;
- a representative of a foundation, corporation, or other funding institution;
- a program evaluator;
- or someone else who has direct knowledge of the organization's work and impact.

The organization can initiate its own nomination, and request nominations from key people so long as all three nominations are entirely completed by the nominators themselves.

Nominations from development or public relations staff, consultants, or professional grant writers will therefore not be accepted. In that spirit, we ask that nomination forms not be "ghost written" by others, and that nominators sign their nominations affirming their personal completion of the form. The Blue Foundation will follow up with selected nominations by contacting the nominators and others in the community to learn more about the nominated organization and its progress.

Relevant attachments, such as program brochures, newsletters and news clippings with dates, are not necessary, but may be included if deemed particularly important. Items will not be returned. Additional letters of reference beyond the three named nominators will not be considered, unless The Blue Foundation specifically requests such information.

[Back to top](#)

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## NOMINATED ORGANIZATION: pdf file

4. [Link to:]  
NOMINATOR CONTACT INFORMATION: pdf file

5. [Link to:]  
QUESTIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY EACH NOMINATOR: pdf file

6. [Link to:]  
SELECTION COMMITTEE (see below)

**The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida  
Sapphire Award**

**Selection Committee**

National

MICHAEL BEACHLER, MPH  
Founding Director, Rural Health Policy Center; Associate Professor, Department of Family and Health Policy, Pennsylvania State University; former Senior Program Officer, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; Hershey, PA

JUDYANN BIGBY, MD  
Medical Director, Office for Women, Family and Community Programs, Brigham and Women's Hospital; Associate Professor, Harvard Medical School; Boston, MA

JAMES STOUT, MD, MPH  
Associate Professor of Pediatrics, University of Washington; former Medical Director, Odessa Brown Children's Clinic; Seattle, WA

Florida

CYRIL BLAVO, DO, MPH  
Chair, Department of Pediatrics, Nova Southeastern University; Fort Lauderdale

KRISTI KRUEGER  
Television News Anchor and Health Reporter, WPLG TV; Miami

CHARLES MAHAN, MD, Selection Committee Chair  
Professor, Community and Family Health/Obstetrics; former Dean, College of Public Health; University of South Florida; Sarasota

KAREN PELHAM



Director, Policy and Legislative Affairs, Florida Association of Community Health Centers; Tallahassee

LISA SIMPSON, MB , BCh, MPH  
Chair, Child Health Policy, University of South Florida and All Children's Hospital;  
Sarasota

RANDY KAMMER  
Vice President, Regulatory Affairs and Public Policy, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida; Jacksonville

This list is for informational purposes only. Please respect these volunteers and do not contact them directly about The Sapphire Award.

[Back to top](#)

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## NEWS RELEASE **NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 1, 2005

Contact: Susan B. Towler, APR  
(904) 905-6803  
susan.towler@bcbsfl.com

### **New Award to Promote Florida's Outstanding Health Programs** *The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida will present The Sapphire Award Recognizing Community Health Excellence*

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – As part of its mission to advance access to quality health care for all Floridians, The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida recently created The Sapphire Award Recognizing Community Health Excellence. This Award will recognize and promote programs that provide health care access to Florida's underserved and uninsured and seek to improve the health care of Florida's at-risk communities.

The Blue Foundation will select up to three nonprofit recipients annually. Each recipient will receive a financial award of up to \$120,000 toward its community health objectives.

The Sapphire Award's recognition of effective initiatives is meant to promote greater and more lasting support for improved services and systems that can be sustained over time. The Award seeks to identify and reward organizations demonstrating strategies that build on community assets, enhance organizational capacity, foster systemic change and/or lead to lasting policy changes that improve health services. "There are numerous health clinics and programs in our state that can serve as model programs for how to implement local uninsured solutions," said Susan Towler, executive director of The Blue Foundation. "Through The Sapphire Award, we hope to shed light on these clinics and programs and share their successful models with others serving this population."

All completed nominations will be considered and evaluated through a rigorous process. Final decisions of Award recipients will be made by a Selection Committee comprised of public health and health communication experts around the country and Florida. The Selection Committee is chaired by Dr. Charles Mahan, professor and former dean, College of Public Health, University of South Florida.

Award nomination materials are due in full by no later than June 29, 2005, and winners will be announced in Fall 2005. For nomination materials or to submit inquiries about The Sapphire Award, please contact [SapphireAward@bcbsfl.com](mailto:SapphireAward@bcbsfl.com) or call 1-800-477-3736, extension 63215, option 2.

Through strategic grantmaking, The Blue Foundation supports programs that increase access to quality health-related services for uninsured and underserved Floridians. In addition to funding through The Sapphire Award, The Blue Foundation annually awards more than \$1 million in grants.

The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida is a separate, philanthropic affiliate of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida (BCBSF) and is incorporated in the state of Florida. The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida, and its parent, BCBSF, are independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies. For more information concerning The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida, please visit its web site at [www.bluefoundationfl.org](http://www.bluefoundationfl.org).

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[Link to:] [Contact Us](#) - link to email form pop-up

Inquiries can be made to: [SapphireAward@bcbsfl.com](mailto:SapphireAward@bcbsfl.com)  
Telephone: 1-800-477-3736, ext. 6321 option 2